

Appl. No. 09/328,667

Attorney Docket No.: 113394

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for communication employing a plurality of gatekeepers, the method comprising the steps of:
- receiving a request for information at a first gatekeeper;
  - determining whether the information is known by the first gatekeeper;
  - sending the request via at least one intermediate gatekeeper to a second gatekeeper if the information is not known by the first gatekeeper;
  - receiving the requested information from the second gatekeeper via the at least one intermediate gatekeeper wherein a hierarchical level associated with said first gatekeeper is different from a hierarchical level associated with said intermediate gatekeeper; and
  - sending the requested information to a third gatekeeper wherein the first gatekeeper and the third gatekeeper are of a same hierarchical level and located in a same domain and wherein said request was received from said third gatekeeper without said request having been sent through any other gatekeeper.
2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of:
- storing the received information in at least one of the first, intermediate and second gatekeepers.
3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said sending the request includes the steps of:
- determining a next gatekeeper in a gatekeeper-level path to the requested information.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the information includes an application address.

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5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the information includes resource information.

6. Canceled.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2, further comprising the step of:

attempting to connect to a called entity using information contained in the information.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 3, further comprising the step of:

determining whether a hop-count field has been set to zero; and  
if the hop-count field has been set to zero, dropping the received information.

9. (Original) The method of claim 3, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-zone gatekeeper.

10. (Original) The method of claim 3, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-domain gatekeeper.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for communication, the apparatus comprising:

a processor; and

a memory coupled to said processor, said memory storing instructions adapted to be executed by said processor for performing the steps of:

receiving a request for information at a first gatekeeper;

determining whether the information is known by the first gatekeeper;

sending the request via an intermediate gatekeeper to a second gatekeeper if the information is not known by the first gatekeeper;

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receiving the requested information from the second gatekeeper via the intermediate gatekeeper wherein a hierarchical level associated with said first gatekeeper is different from a hierarchical level associated with said intermediate gatekeeper; and

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X  
X  
sending the requested information to a third gatekeeper wherein the first gatekeeper and the third gatekeeper are of a same hierarchical level and located in a same domain and wherein said request was received from said third gatekeeper without said request having been sent through any other gatekeeper.

12. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the instructions further perform the step of:

storing the received information in at least one of the gatekeepers.

13. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein sending the request includes the step of determining a next gatekeeper in the gatekeeper-level path to the requested information.

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the information includes an application address.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 11, wherein the information includes resource information.

16. Canceled.

17. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 12, said memory storing further instructions adapted to be run on said processor, said further instructions comprising:

attempting to connect to a called entity using information contained in the information.

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18. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 13, said memory storing further instructions adapted to be run on said processor, said further instructions comprising:

determining whether a hop-count field has been set to zero; and  
if the hop-count field has been set to zero, dropping the received information.

19. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-zone gatekeeper.

20. (Original) The apparatus of claim 13, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-domain gatekeeper.

21. (Currently Amended) A medium for communications, the communication using a plurality of gatekeepers at different hierarchical levels, said medium storing instructions adapted to be executed by a processor for performing the steps of:

receiving a request for information at a first gatekeeper;  
determining whether the information is known by the first gatekeeper;  
sending the request via an intermediate gatekeeper to a second gatekeeper if the information is not known by the first gatekeeper;

receiving the requested information from the second gatekeeper via the intermediate gatekeeper wherein the first gatekeeper and the intermediate gatekeeper are at different hierarchical levels; and

sending the requested information to a third gatekeeper wherein the first gatekeeper and the third gatekeeper are of a same hierarchical level and located in a same domain and wherein the request was received from the third gatekeeper without said request having been sent through any other gatekeeper.

22. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 21, wherein the instructions further perform the step of:

storing the received information in one of the gatekeepers.

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23. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 21, wherein said sending the request includes the steps of:

determining a next gatekeeper in the gatekeeper-level path to the requested information.

24. (Original) The medium of claim 21, wherein the information includes an application address.

25. (Original) The medium of claim 21, wherein the information includes resource information.

26. Canceled.

27. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 22, storing further information adapted to be executed by a processor, the further information comprising:

attempting to connect to a called entity using information contained in the information.

28. (Previously Presented) The medium of claim 23, storing further information adapted to be executed by a processor, the further information comprising:

determining whether a hop-count field has been set to zero; and

if the hop-count field has been set to zero, dropping the received information.

29. (Original) The medium of claim 23, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-zone gatekeeper.

30. (Original) The medium of claim 23, where the first gatekeeper is an inter-domain gatekeeper.